

Social Equity LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



JUNE 5 - 7, 2013 - NC STATE UNIVERSITY, RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

Inclusive Excellence

What Have We Done To Our Daughters? Maternity Leave-- Policy and Practice

Friday 9:30 am; Panel 1

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Abstract: The purpose of this research is to understand the experiences and perceptions of women who have utilized maternity leave benefits. Our research question is “What are the perceptions and experiences of participants about their utilization of maternity leave benefits?” We explore the use of maternity leave benefits by conducting in-depth interviews of women. For comparative purposes, we interviewed women employed in public universities, private universities, and in the private sector within the pharmaceutical industry. Our findings indicate that there is some disconnect between official policies in organizations—even those that purport to be family friendly—and the perceptions of the employees of those organizations with regard to the utilization of maternity leave benefits. We suggest that continued dialogue in both the private and public sectors is needed on this very important issue. Institutions of higher learning that eliminated formal, paid maternity leave benefits may need to reconsider that decision. All organizations may need to think about offering paid paternity leave, and encouraging its use.